

IN THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (currently amended) A method for performing a failure mode and effects analysis of an intended process, comprising:

gathering data related to failures occurring in a ~~similar~~ an existing process;

identifying potential failures in the intended process by a first entity based on the gathered data; and

performing a failure mode and effects analysis on the intended process by a second entity based on the potential failures identified by the first entity; and [[.]]

taking preventative action to prevent the potential failures in an order determined by results of the failure mode and effects analysis.

2. (currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of gathering data further comprises collecting the data at a location where the ~~similar~~ existing process is being performed.

3. (currently amended) The method of Claim 2, wherein the step of collecting the data at the location where the ~~similar~~ existing process is being performed further comprises interviewing persons associated with the ~~similar~~ existing process.

4. (currently amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of

gathering data further comprises steps selected from the group consisting of reviewing previous failure mode effects analyses performed on ~~a similar~~ an existing process, reviewing improved items in ~~a similar~~ an existing process, reviewing safety/quality data in ~~a similar~~ an existing process, and analyzing significant differences in ~~a similar~~ an existing process.

5. (original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of identifying potential failures further comprises quantifying a severity associated with each potential failure.

6. (original) The method of Claim 5, wherein the step of performing a failure mode and effects analysis further comprises quantifying an occurrence ranking associated with each potential failure.

7. (original) The method of Claim 6, wherein the step of performing a failure mode and effects analysis further comprises quantifying a detection ranking associated with each potential failure.

8. (currently amended) The method of Claim 7, wherein the step of performing a failure mode and effects analysis further comprises calculating a risk priority number from the severity associated with each potential failure, the occurrence ranking, and the detection ranking, the risk priority number used to rank ~~the~~ an order in which the potential failures will be corrected.

9. (currently amended) The method of Claim 7, wherein the severity associated with each potential failure, occurrence ranking, and detection ranking are quantified using scoring guidelines provided by the first entity.

10. (original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the second entity is larger than the first entity.

11. (original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the second entity at least partially comprises the first entity.

12. (original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising identifying factors associated with each identified potential failure.

13. (currently amended) A method for performing failure mode and effects analysis of a new manufacturing process, comprising:

conducting line talks with workers in ~~the~~ associated with an existing manufacturing process related to failures occurring in the existing manufacturing process;

identifying potential failures in the new manufacturing process by a first entity based on the line talks;

ranking ~~the~~ severity of the potential failures by the first entity;

performing a failure mode and effects analysis on the new manufacturing process by a second entity based on the potential failures identified by the first entity;

and [[.]]

taking preventive action to prevent the potential failures in an order determined by results of the failure mode and effects analysis.

14. (original) The method of Claim 13, wherein the step of identifying potential failures further comprises quantifying a severity associated with each potential failure.

15. (original) The method of Claim 14, wherein the step of performing a failure mode and effects analysis further comprises quantifying an occurrence ranking associated with each potential failure.

16. (original) The method of Claim 15, wherein the step of performing a failure mode and effects analysis further comprises quantifying a detection ranking associated with each potential failure.

17. (currently amended) The method of Claim 16, wherein the step of performing a failure mode and effects analysis further comprises calculating a risk priority number from the severity associated with each potential failure, the occurrence ranking, and the detection ranking, the risk priority number used to rank the order in which the potential failures will be corrected.

18. (currently amended) The method of Claim 16, wherein the severity associated with each potential failure, occurrence ranking, and detection ranking are

quantified using scoring guidelines provided by the first entity.

19. (original) The method of Claim 13, wherein the second entity is larger than the first entity.

20. (original) The method of Claim 13, wherein the second entity at least partially comprises the first entity.

21. (original) The method of Claim 13 further comprises identifying factors associated with each identified potential failure.